

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 05148 251854 Z

70

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 NIC-01 AID-20 PC-15 RSR-01 /159 W  
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R 251518 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0037

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

473 -?/ AMEOPASSY ADDIS ABABA 2083

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E. O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, ETRD, NI, UK

SUBJECT: GOWON VISIT TO LONDON

REF: LONDON 7092

SUMMARY: NIGERIAN REACTION TO GOWON'S VISIT WAS FAVORABLE.  
TALKS BETWEEN ARIKPO AND HOME WERE CORDIAL WITH BOTH SIDES  
REITERATING BASIC POSITIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. NIGERIAN REACTION TO GOWON STATE VISIT TO UK HAS  
BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY FAVORABLE. VISIT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED  
AS "TREMENDOUS" SUCCESS FOR NIGERIA AND AFRICA, AND  
PRESS REACTION TO GOWON'S PERFORMANCE AS STATESMAN AND  
DIPLOMAT HAS BEEN MORE THAN LAUDATORY.

2. GOWN HIMSELF HAS DESCRIBED HIS TRIP "AS A GREAT  
SUCCESS IN ALL RESPECTS." AT HIS RETURN TO A  
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 05148 251854 Z

TUMULTUOUS WELCOME IN LAGOS, GOWON STATED VISIT OFFERED OPPORTUNITY ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION WITH HMG AND HE EXPRESSED HOPE THIS WOULD PROMOTE GREATER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLE OF AFRICA AND BRITAIN. GOWON DESCRIBED HIS TALKS WITH HEATH AS USEFUL WHICH WOULD HELP ACHIEVE BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES. TURNING TO SURVIVAL OF COMMONWEALTH, HE SAID THIS DEPENDENT ON DEDICATION OF ITS MEMBERS AND NIGERIA WOULD CONTINUE TO DO ITS BEST TO ENSURE ITS SURVIVAL. GOWON FURTHER STATED THAT AN INVITATION HAD BEEN EXTENDED TO THE QUEEN TO MAKE A STATE VISIT TO NIGERIA. QUEEN PURPORTEDLY INDICATED HER DESIRE TO VISIT NIGERIA AGAIN.

3. WESTERN STATE GOVERNOR LLUWOLE ROTIMI, WHO ACCOMPANIED GOWON, REPORTEDLY TOLD DEPUTY UK HIGH COMMISSIONER THAT SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME GOWON'S TRIP TO UK CONFOUNDED GOWON'S WORST CRITICS WHO HAD NOT FAVORED TRIP. HE SAID THAT GOWON BELIEVED THAT AFRICA AND EUROPE CAN

AND MUST COOPERATE TO THEIR MUTUAL BENEFIT UNDER ARRANGEMENTS THAT WOULD GUARANTEE RESPECT FOR DIGNITY OF MAN AND SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ALL NATIONS.

4. UK HICOM AGREES VISIT WENT OFF WELL AND REPORTS ARIKPO-HOME TALKS WERE HELD IN AMICABLE ATMOSPHERE. BOTH SIDES REITERATED THEIR BASIC POSITIONS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. ARIKPO SAID UNSYG- SAG TALKS ON NAMIBIA WERE OF NO VALUE AND WOULD ACHIEVE NOTHING. HOME SAID THEY WERE USEFUL AND URGED THEIR CONTINUATION. RE SR, HOME EXPRESSED FAVOR

OF TALKS TAKING PLACE BETWEEN LOCAL BLACK LEADERSHIP AND SMITH REGIME WHILE ARIKPO REPEATED WELL- KNOWN AF POSITION. ARIKPO ALSO NOTED THAT RECENT OAU MEETING WITNESSED FOR FIRST TIME MORE VOCAL ATTACKS BY MOST OF FRANCOPHONE AFS AGAINST FRENCH POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

5. COMMENT: GOWON VISIT CAPS OFF ACTIVE POLICY PURSUED BY UK SINCE PEARCE REPORT REJECTION WHICH REMOVED IMMEDIATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 05148 251854 Z

OBSTACLE TO CLOSER UK- NIGERIAN RELATIONS. ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCES OF GOWON VISIT INDICATE FMG PLEASED WITH WAY IT WENT. EXEMPT. REINHARDT

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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**Draft Date:** 25 JUN 1973  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**TAGS:** ETRD, OVIP, PFOR, NI, UK  
**To:** AF  
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO ABIDJAN  
ACCRA  
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